

# ADVICE TO THE THREADBARE

## A Foot in the Door

NuqneH, tthingonpu'

I am q'IDar ro'bergh zantai-Qoltar, Fleet Quatermistress. I've been making Klingon uniforms longer than I've been a member of the Armada, and have been a teacher a lot longer than that. Ever since I got my webpage up, I've been getting questions from Klingons working on their own look and decided it was time to get my notions on the subject on paper in some kind of organized fashion--so, here goes.

We'd better start at the beginning--you're a new recruit and you're excited about joining the Armada and you've been told that there are no dues, but that your first promotion depends upon you getting into uniform. How? Your options are to make it, buy it or assemble it. It took me 3 months to make my first one(s)--I had to do my kids, too. But you're excited about the group and you don't want to wait that long to join the fun! So off to 1-800-TREKKER you go, and for 60 bucks you get this pale cheesy thing with paper stickers on it that snags the first time you put it on--that is if you can *get* it on. They run small. Bummer! These things are worse looking than those feddie pajamas! Now what? The Klingon bumps in a box aren't too bad, though the make-up is blotchy, so at least your head looks kinda Klingon, so what to do about the uniform?

A fellow costumer once explained to me that costuming needs at least one of three things: Time, Talent, and Money.

**Time--** to learn how to sew, sculpt etc, whatever skills it takes to make your outfit.

**Talent--** makes the above go faster (it also gets you recruited as quartermaster for your ship)

**Money--** really helps if you don't have the first two.

Here are some suggestions to get you into Klingon style inexpensively, without much sewing skill:

- 1) Start haunting thrift stores, resale stores, flea markets, garage sales, surplus stores and the Salvation Army stores for fur, fake fur, leather, fake leather coats and vests. You can make a woman's coat into a man's vest by cutting off the sleeves and collar and belting it shut. If you find a leather thing to turn into a vest, add fur sleeves and you'll have a very Klingon look. If you want to get some ideas for how this would work, revisit DS9--"Blood Oath" and also look at the outfit KaHleS wears. Keltok, the captain of the Lone

Raptor found a coat that alternates fur with leather and got the typical Klingon stripe motif that he still wears. Winter is winding down. This is when even resale stores lower prices on coats. Go for it!

- 2) Look for other possible accessories in the same locations--wide belts, boots, gloves with long wide cuffs, or fingerless sports gloves. And, of course, boots. You may also find some massive buckles that'll do for a starter outfit. And some Klingons really get into chains. Remember, you want to *look* dangerous.
- 3) You'll probably need an honor sash or baldric--these are worn on the right shoulder across to the left hip and are used to display pins, battle citations and other cool stuff. Worf wears one that is some sort of chain maille, others are also metallic. I make mine out of automotive vinyl and other metallic looking things. Keep your eyes open for shiny things!
- 4) Klingons always carry weapons--but mostly props--PROPS, GUYS. Wearing live steel and carrying even dull metal battleHs or megleHs can get you ejected from public spaces, especially if you wave 'em around. For starters, head for the toy store and let your imagination go wild! You can always paint that lime green ray gun.

Some of you may have noticed that I have avoided the original series look entirely. While the Sci-fi Channel is running STTOS, the general population has largely forgotten the old Klingon look and you want to avoid blank stares when you are in public. Save the STTOS ensemble for conventions.

There! That should get you on your way. Remember that your uniform is a work in progress and that you can add to it at any time or replace items with more "authentic" gear as you get the money or expertise to do so.

And now for some shameless advertising. I make stuff, sell stuff, but I'm not the only one and I will devote a column to sources and resources, but for now, check out my website at <http://www.qidar.com>, I will be happy to sell you things, or just answer questions about uniforms. Just be warned--anything you ask me may end up in this column!

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